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President Joe Biden's son, Hunter Biden, leaves after a court appearance, July 26, 2023, in Wilmington, Del.

Associated Press



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## Hunter Biden tells Congress he'd testify publicly, setting up a potential high-stakes face-off

By Lindsay Whitehurst  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Hunter Biden offered Tuesday to testify publicly before Congress, striking a defiant note in response to a subpoena from Republicans and setting up a potential high-stakes face-off even as a separate special counsel probe unfolds and his father, President Joe Biden, campaigns for reelection. The Democratic president's son slammed the subpoena's request for closed-door testimony, saying it can be manipulated. But Rep. James Comer of Kentucky, the chairman of the House Oversight Committee, stood firm, saying Republicans expect "full cooperation" with their original demand for a deposition.

Hunter Biden's lawyer called the inquiry a "fishing expedition," a response in line with the more forceful legal approach he's taken in recent months as congressional Republicans pursue an impeachment inquiry seeking to tie his father to his business dealings. The early-November subpoenas to Hunter Biden and others from Comer were the inquiry's most aggressive step yet, testing the reach of congressional oversight powers. Republicans have so far failed to uncover evidence directly implicating President Biden in any wrongdoing. But questions have arisen about the ethics surrounding the Biden family's international business, and lawmakers insist their evidence paints a troubling picture of "influence peddling" in their business dealings, particularly with clients overseas.

Comer said Tuesday that



Hunter Biden walks with wife Melissa Cohen as they visit shops with President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden in Nantucket, Mass., Nov. 24, 2023.

the president's son could testify publicly in the future, but he expects him to sit for a deposition on Dec. 13 as outlined in the subpoena.

"Hunter Biden is trying to play by his own rules instead of following the rules required of everyone else. That won't stand with House Republicans," he said. Rep. Jim Jordan, chair of the House Judiciary Committee, also pressed the deposition date followed by a public hearing — a timetable that would take any hearing closer to the 2024 election and heighten the political stakes for President Biden.

Hunter Biden, for his part, said his business dealings are legitimate and accused Republicans of seeking to contort his past struggles with addiction. His attorney Abbe Lowell said in Tuesday's letter that his client had previously offered to speak with the committee without a response. He's willing to ap-

pear publicly rather than behind closed doors because those sessions can be selectively leaked and used to manipulate the facts, Lowell said.

"If, as you claim, your efforts are important and involve issues that Americans should know about, then let the light shine on these proceedings," Lowell wrote.

Hunter Biden offered to appear on Dec. 13, the date named in the subpoena, or another day next month. His uncle James Biden has also been subpoenaed, as well as former business associate Rob Walker. The subpoenas are bitterly opposed by Democrats, and the White House called for the "irresponsible" subpoenas to be withdrawn.

Rep. Jamie Raskin, the top Democrat on the Oversight Committee, blasted the GOP rejection of Hunter Biden's offer to testify publicly on Dec. 13, saying, "What the Republicans fear most is sunlight and the

truth."

Hunter Biden's response comes as he pushes back against his detractors in court, pursuing a flurry of lawsuits against Republican allies of former President Donald Trump who have traded and passed around private data from a laptop that purportedly belonged to him.

President Biden, for his part, has had little to say about his son's legal woes beyond that Hunter did nothing wrong and he loves his son. The White House strategy has generally been to keep the elder Biden focused on governing and voters focused on his policy achievements.

That could prove more difficult as Hunter Biden continues to fight both the congressional probe and a criminal case into the next year, and there are indications it's politically fraught territory for the president.

An October poll by The Associated Press-NORC

(AP Photo/Stephanie Scarbrough)

Center for Public Affairs Research found that 35% of U.S. adults believe Joe Biden personally has done something illegal with regard to the business dealings of his son. An additional 33% say the president acted unethically but did not violate the law. Just 30% say Joe Biden did nothing wrong.

Hunter Biden is charged with three firearms felonies related to the 2018 purchase of a gun during a period he has acknowledged being addicted to drugs. The case was filed after an expected plea deal on tax evasion and gun charges imploded during a July hearing.

No new tax charges have been filed, but the Justice Department special counsel overseeing the long-running investigation has indicated they are possible in California, where he now lives. □



## Rosalynn Carter honored by family, friends, first ladies and presidents including husband Jimmy

By Bill Barrow  
Associated Press

**ATLANTA (AP)** — Rosalynn Carter was memorialized Tuesday as a matriarch who felt most comfortable among the impoverished and vulnerable as she was mourned by a rare gathering of all living U.S. first ladies and multiple presidents, including her 99-year-old husband Jimmy Carter in the front row. The tribute service marked the second day of a three-day schedule of public events celebrating the former first lady and global humanitarian who died Nov. 19 at home in Plains, Georgia, at the age of 96. Tributes began Monday in the Carters' native Sumter County and continued at Glenn Memorial Church in Atlanta.

"My mother was the glue that held our family together through the ups and downs and thicks and thins of our family's politics," her son James Earl "Chip" Carter III said.

The former president, who is 10 months into home hospice care and hadn't been seen in public since September, watched from his wheelchair, reclining and covered by a blanket featuring his wife's face, with Chip and his daughter Amy holding his hands. Their other sons, Jeff and Jack, flanked them.

"He never wants to be very far from her," Carter Center CEO Paige Alexander said.

President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden, their long-time friends, joined them in the front row, along with former President Bill Clinton and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and former first ladies Melania Trump, Michelle Obama and Laura Bush. Vice President Kamala Harris and second gentleman Doug Emhoff paid their respects, as did Georgia's U.S. senators and Gov. Brian Kemp and his wife Marty. More than 1,000 people, including a sizeable contingent



The casket of former first lady Rosalynn Carter, arrives inside Glenn Memorial Church, Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2023, in Atlanta.

(AP Photo/Andrew Harnik)

of Secret Service agents, filled the sanctuary. Former Presidents Donald Trump, Barack Obama and George W. Bush were invited but will not attend. The service reflected Rosalynn Carter's status as a global figure while emphasizing her more private profile as a family matriarch who preferred a simple life and held a deep religious faith.

"She had met kings and queens, presidents, others in authority, powerful corporate leaders and celebrities," Chip Carter said. "She said the people that she felt the most comfortable with and the people she enjoyed being with the most were those that lived in absolute abject poverty."

The pews filled with political power players, but front and center were her children and dozens of grandchildren and great-grandchildren all surrounding Jimmy Carter, who grieved not as a former president, but as her partner of 77 years.

The speakers came from many chapters of her long life: Chip as the son who recalled his once-shy mother coming into her own in business and politics; Kathryn Cade as the White House aide who stayed on as a close adviser as Ro-

salynn Carter helped build The Carter Center and its global reach; Judy Woodruff as a journalist who covered the Carter presidency; and Amy Carter, who read a love note her father wrote to her mother 75 years before.

"Their partnership and love story was a defining feature of her life," Amy Carter said.

Cade described Rosalynn Carter's time as first lady as "really just one chapter in a life that was about caring for others." Woodruff recalled Rosalynn Carter lobbying lawmakers, campaigning separately from her husband. □

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# The victims of Alex Murdaugh's financial fraud angrily confront him in court before his sentencing

By Jeffrey Collins  
Associated Press

(AP) - For years, South Carolina attorney Alex Murdaugh looked his anguished clients in the eyes and promised to help them with their medical bills, their suffering or simply to survive. Then he stole some, if not all, of what he won for many of them.

At a hearing preceding his sentencing Tuesday, those clients got to look Murdaugh in the eye and tell him how he had destroyed their trust.

"I'm not crying for what he stole from me. I'm crying for what he did to everybody," said Jordan Jinks, a friend of Murdaugh's since childhood.

The emotional testimony came as the disgraced lawyer waited to see if a judge would accept a deal sentencing him to 27 years in prison for stealing about \$12 million.

The courtroom drama marked yet another step in the fall of a powerful and respected attorney whose family name dominated the legal scene in a small Hampton County for generations, and whose al-



Alex Murdaugh shakes hands with his attorney Jim Griffin during his sentencing for stealing from 18 clients, Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2023, at the Beaufort County Courthouse in Beaufort, S.C. (Andrew J. Whitaker/The Post And Courier via AP, Pool)

leged crimes have been a perennial topic of true crime podcasts and online chat groups.

Standing in court in an orange prison jumpsuit, Murdaugh listened as the victims recounted how the man with a commanding presence and seductive Southern charm had duped them.

Jinks went to Murdaugh after he hurt his neck when someone rear-ended his car and later incurred hundreds of thousands of dollars in medical bills. Jinks paid the bills in advance, having been assured by Murdaugh that he would obtain a settlement to pay him back. Murdaugh got the money, but kept it him-

self, financially ruining his friend.

"The money you stole from me, I would have gave it to you," Jinks said. "Why bro? Why?"

State prosecutors and defense lawyers negotiated the 27-year prison sentence for Murdaugh, who is already serving a life term without parole after a jury

found him guilty of killing his wife, Maggie, with a rifle, and younger son, Paul, with a shotgun in June 2021. Judge Clifton Newman, who also presided over the murder trial, took a 45-minute lunch break to decide whether to accept it.

Murdaugh adamantly denies killing his wife and son. His lawyers are seeking a new trial, citing allegations that the court clerk tampered with the jury. A different judge will decide whether to grant Murdaugh a hearing in which jurors, the clerk and maybe even Newman could be questioned under oath.

In contrast, Murdaugh fully admitted to the financial crimes. On Tuesday, he spent nearly 45 minutes apologizing to his family for bringing them shame and dishonor, and addressing all his victims, although he did not cry as he had when he testified in his own defense during his murder trial. "I want each of you who spoke to know I listened to you. I heard you. Your pain and hurt is palpable. ... I promise you it resonates with me," Murdaugh said. □

# Staff reassigned at Florida school after allegations that transgender student played on girls' team

Associated Press  
COCONUT CREEK, Fla. (AP)

— Dozens of students participated in a walkout at a South Florida high school on Tuesday, a day after their principal and four other staff members were removed from their positions as officials investigate allegations of a transgender student being allowed to play on a girls' volleyball team, in violation of state law.

The demonstration occurred at Monarch High School in Broward County. Local news footage shows a large crowd of students walking out of the school building and congregating outside on school property.

The school district on Monday reassigned principal James Cecil, assistant principal Kenneth May, athletic director Dione Hester and information management technician Jessica Norton to non-school sites pending the outcome of the investigation. Also, temporary athletic coach Alex Burgess was told his services are paused while the investigation proceeds.

"We will continue to follow state law and will take appropriate action based on the outcome of the investigation," school district spokesman John Sullivan said in a statement. "We are committed to providing all our students with a

safe and inclusive learning environment."

In 2021, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who is running for president as a Republican, signed a state law that bars transgender girls and women from playing on public school teams intended for student athletes identified as girls at birth.

Broward Schools Superintendent Peter Licata said during a news conference Tuesday that a member of the community had made a complaint about the student athlete last week. When questioned by reporters, Licata denied that the reassignments had anything to do with a lawsuit the student and her par-

ents had previously brought against the school. A fed-

eral judge ruled against the student earlier this month. □



Students from Monarch High School in Coconut Creek, Fla., walk out of the school building Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2023, in support of a transgender student who plays on the girls volleyball team.

(Joe Cavaretta/South Florida Sun-Sentinel via AP)



## British inquiry finds serious failings at hospitals where worker had sex with more than 100 corpses

By Brian Melley  
Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — A British government-ordered inquiry said Tuesday it found serious failings at hospitals where an electrician who was later convicted of murder had been able to have sex with more than 100 corpses over a 15-year period without being detected.

David Fuller's necrophilia was uncovered in 2020 when police used DNA to tie him to the 1987 slayings of two women and also discovered millions of images of sexual abuse in his home. The images included videos of him having sex with the dead bodies of women and girls in the mortuaries at two hospitals where he worked in south-east England.

"The offenses that David Fuller committed were truly shocking," the 308-page inquiry report said. "However, the failures of management, governance, regulation and processes, and a persistent lack of curiosity, all contributed to the creation of the environment



Undated handout file photo issued by Kent Police of David Fuller.

(Kent Police/PA via AP)

in which he was able to offend.

"This is not solely the story of a rogue electrical maintenance supervisor. David Fuller's victims and their relatives were repeatedly let

down by those at all levels whose job it was to protect and care for them."

Fuller, 69, is serving a life sentence with no chance of release after pleading guilty to two counts of mur-

der. He is serving a concurrent 12-year term after admitting dozens of instances of necrophilia that the prosecutor in the case said had never been seen on that scale before in a British court.

The inquiry was launched to find out how Fuller was able to get away with it for so long and to prevent such abuse from ever happening again.

Fuller, who had a criminal record as a burglar that he never disclosed in work papers, was hired at the now-closed Kent and Sussex Hospital two years after he killed Wendy Knell, 25, and Caroline Pierce, 20, in two separate attacks in the town of Tunbridge Wells in 1987. Those crimes wouldn't be solved for 33 years, after he moved on to work at the Tunbridge Wells Hospital, in Pembury. Fuller committed 140 violations against the bodies of at least 101 girls and women aged 9 to 100 between 2005 and 2020, the inquiry found. There was time-stamped photographic or video evidence of each

instance.

The inquiry led by Jonathan Michael, a former NHS chief executive, made 17 recommendations including that surveillance cameras be installed in the mortuary and post-mortem room, and that non-mortuary workers and contractors be accompanied to the mortuary with another staff member.

Miles Scott, who became chief executive of Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust in 2018, said the vast majority of the report's recommendations had been put in place and others would be accomplished soon. He said in a statement he was "deeply sorry for the pain and anguish" of the families of Fuller's victims.

Fuller was brazen in committing his crimes, taking risks during working hours when other employees were in the mortuary, the report said. The inquiry said it could not determine how he had been able to carry out the abuse during working hours without being caught. □

## Panama's Supreme Court declares 20-year contract for Canadian copper mine unconstitutional

By Kathia Martinez and Juan Zamorano  
Associated Press

**PANAMA CITY (AP)** — Panama's Supreme Court ruled unanimously Tuesday that a 20-year concession for a Canadian copper mine that has been the focus of widespread environmental protests was unconstitutional.

Opponents of the Cobre Panama mine argued it would damage a forested coastal area and threaten water supplies. The announcement of the nine-member court's decision after four days of deliberations set off cheers among a crowd of people waiting outside and waving Panamanian flags.

Minera Panama, the local

subsidiary of Canada's First Quantum Minerals, which operates the mine in central Panama, said in a statement that "Cobre Panama

acknowledges the court's decision."

The mine employs thousands and accounts for 3% of Panama's gross domes-

tic product.

In March, Panama's legislature reached an agreement with First Quantum allowing Minera Panama to continue operating the huge copper mine for at least 20 more years. The open-pit mine was temporarily closed last year when talks between the government and First Quantum broke down over payments the government wanted.

The contract, given final approval Oct. 20, allowed the subsidiary to continue operating the mine in a biodiverse jungle on the Atlantic coast west of the capital for the next 20 years, with the possibility of extending for a further 20 years if the site remained productive. The dispute over the mine

led to some of Panama's most widespread protests in recent years, including a blockade of the mine's power plant. Protesters also blocked parts of the Pan American highway, including a stretch near the border with Costa Rica.

Just before the ruling was announced, they opened the roadway so freight trucks could get through. The Canadian government said it respected Tuesday's ruling and was following the contract negotiation closely. In an email, Jean-Pierre J. Godbout, a spokesperson for the government's Global Affairs Department, said the government "consistently hopes for an agreed solution that is beneficial to all parties." □



Protesters celebrate as they learn that Panama's Supreme Court has declared unconstitutional a 20-year concession for a Canadian copper mine that had sparked weeks of protests, in Panama City, Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2023.



# 13 Sierra Leone military officers are under arrest for trying to stage a coup, a minister says

By Chinedu Asadu  
Associated Press

**ABUJA, Nigeria (AP)** — Attacks on Sierra Leone's main military barracks and prisons were a failed coup attempt and have resulted in the arrest of 13 military officers, the government's spokesman said Tuesday. The attackers attempted to "overthrow the elected government of Sierra Leone," Information Minister Chernor Bah said at a briefing to reporters about the early morning attacks that took security forces and residents by surprise in the usually peaceful capital city of Freetown on Sunday.

"Thirteen military officers are currently in custody and one other civilian ... in this incident we are now calling a failed coup," Bah said. Coming months after Sierra Leone's President Julius Maada Bio was re-elected for a second term in a disputed vote in June, a coup attempt in the West African nation further raises political tensions in West and Central Africa. Coups have surged in the region,



The streets of Freetown, Sierra Leone, are empty during a curfew on Sunday, Nov. 26, 2023.

(AP Photo/TJ Bade, File)

with eight military takeovers since 2020, including in Niger and Gabon this year. Residents in Freetown were awoken by sounds of heavy gunfire Sunday as gunmen broke into the key armory in the country's largest military barracks, located near the presidential villa in a heavily guarded

part of the city. The attackers in their dozens also targeted two prisons in the city, including the central prison where most of the more than 2,000 inmates were freed, according to Col. Sulaiman Massaquoi, acting head of the Sierra Leone Correctional Service.

A civilian was also arrested in connection with the attack and more than 100 of the freed inmates have reported back at the prisons amid a manhunt for fleeing suspects, the information minister said.

Gunshots were heard in the capital on Tuesday as security forces tried to arrest

one of the fleeing suspects. "The person of interest has been arrested and is now in custody of the security forces," the information ministry said in a statement. Many of the attackers were either hiding or still on the run across the country, the Chief of Defense Staff Lt. Gen. Peter Lavahun told the briefing.

He said the armory had no closed-circuit television (CCTV) but that officials were checking to confirm the number of weapons seized.

"We were able to recover two vehicles containing arms and ammunition that were carted away," said Lavahun.

Many in Freetown and across the country remained indoors on Tuesday, more than a day after the government relaxed a 24-hour curfew to a night lockdown.

There have been political tensions in Sierra Leone since Bio's reelection in a vote that the opposition has said was rigged in his favor. □

# 41 Indian construction workers rescued from collapsed tunnel where they were trapped for 17 days

Associated Press

**UTTARKASHI, India (AP)**

— Forty-one construction workers emerged dazed and smiling Tuesday from a collapsed tunnel in northern India where they had spent the last 17 days a happy ending to an ordeal that had gripped the country and led to a massive rescue operation that overcame several setbacks. Locals, relatives and government officials erupted in joy, set off firecrackers and shouted "Bharat Mata ki Jai" Hindi for "Long live mother India" as happy workers walked out after receiving a brief checkup by doctors. Officials hung garlands around their necks as the crowd cheered.

Nitin Gadkari, the country's

minister of road transport and highways, said in a video posted on the social media platform X that he



This handout photo provided by the Uttarakhand State Department of Information and Public Relations shows Pushkar Singh Dhami, right, Chief Minister of the state of Uttarakhand, greeting a worker rescued from the site of an under-construction road tunnel that collapsed in Silkyara in the northern Indian state of Uttarakhand, India, Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2023.

(Uttarakhand State Department of Information and Public Relations via AP)

was "completely relieved and happy" that all of the workers were rescued from the Silkyara Tunnel in Uttarkashi, a town in India's northern state of Uttarakhand. "This was a well-coordinated effort by multiple agencies, marking one of the most significant rescue operations in recent years," Gadkari said. No one was seriously injured or killed when a landslide caused a section of the 4.5-kilometer (2.8-mile) tunnel about 200 meters (220 yards) from the entrance to collapse early on the morning of Nov. 12. The workers were finishing their shifts and many were likely looking forward to celebrating Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, that day. The workers had light in the

collapsed tunnel, and since early in their ordeal, they were provided with food, water and oxygen through pipes. More than a dozen doctors, including psychiatrists, were also at the site monitoring their health. Officials said all 41 workers made it through the ordeal in good health. Before emerging to the cameras and crowds and being whisked away in ambulances, each was given a checkup at a makeshift medical camp in the tunnel entrance. The rescue was expected to be straightforward and last only a few days, but a series of setbacks led to its expansion and to the workers being trapped for more than two weeks. □



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## A brief history of the California Light House

**(Oranjestad)—At the furthest western point of the island, there lies the tallest structure on the island: The California Light House. Standing on top of a limestone cliff, this lighthouse oversees the entire island, offering one of few best views of the island and the surrounding sea. It is also one of the few monuments that hold a rich history.**

The lighthouse was constructed in between 1914-1916, and its first keeper was a young trained lighthouse keeper from Curaçao names Jacob Jacobs. Mr. Frederico Fingal was the last man to have occupied this position until 1962. Though his son, Mr. Romulo Fingal did not continue in his father's footsteps, he does have a special connection to the lighthouse. He sat down with our reporter and shared a bit of its history.

As Mr. Fingal explains, "In 1915, cargo donkeys were hired from Figaroa di Noord to help build the Lighthouse at Westpunt. The donkeys had to walk along

the beach all the way to Westpunt carrying the cargo, poles, cement, and all these things. At that time, it was a difficult task until Aruba got its first truck. These things reflect how people could have accomplished this tremendous job with so little." Mr. Fingal said, "At that time, it wasn't a place for people to work. It was very challenging because it was full of goats and donkeys, and it was very isolated. There were no hotels or roads to get there. There was only a donkey trail. Those were the only means of transportation."

Mr. Fingal continues, "In 1939, I was born in the lighthouse, and my father was the last lighthouse keeper until he retired in 1962. After that, they removed the power cables all the way to the top. According to the story, we couldn't have the light ourselves because they dismantled it, and after many years, I heard that it is in a train museum in San Nicolas, where we found this very special lens that, when the light shines through it, it reaches 30 ki-



lometers out to sea." Mr. Fingal told our reporter.

The lighthouse has a long and very interesting history. The reason why the lighthouse was built, according to Mr. Fingal, dates back to the day when the cargo ship S.S. California sank because of the lack of light. In 1913, Aruba made a request to Curaçao to build a Lighthouse at Westpunt, and the governor of Curaçao responded to Aruba to come back in 1915 with a well-detailed plan. "During the First World War from 1914 to 1918, they had to wait for the light to be transported to Aruba because it was manufactured in France. At that time, there was no electricity, and the light was very interesting because it rotated with a kerosene lamp that planes used; clean kerosene," Mr. Fingal said.

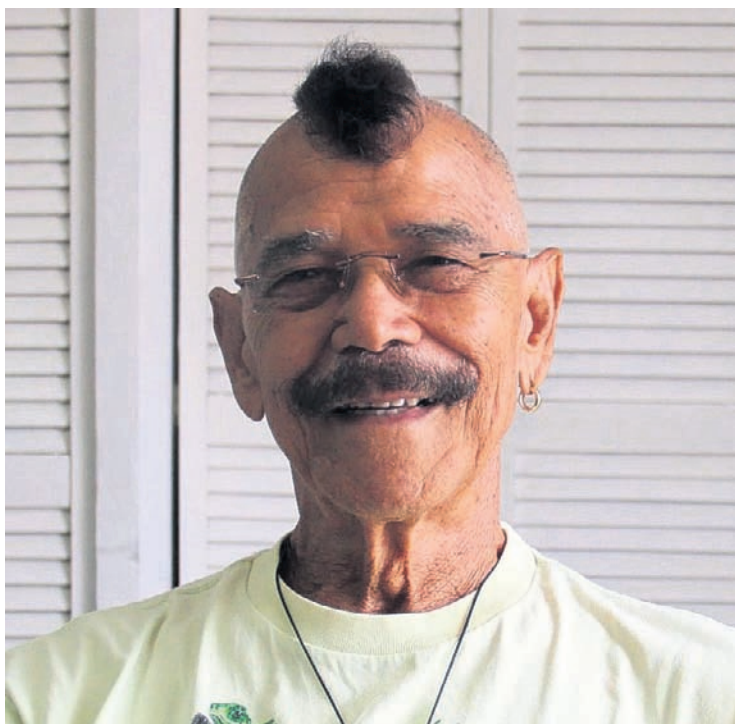
Mr. Fingal discovered something very interesting about the lighthouse after much research was documented in his book 'History

of the Lighthouse at Westpunt.' He found many details: "I found out that the height of the lighthouse was due to the absence of electricity. There was also the presence of coral. There is a long steel cable from where the light is, and under the light, at the highest point, there is a hanging weight, a sort of pendulum that swings like that, with a weight that measures about 1 meter by 30 centimeters wide, which is a block of solid iron attached to a cable. When you release it upwards, it comes down, and the weight that comes down pulls it up, gradually. And while it comes down, the same weight that is descending causes many small wheels to turn in the opposite direction. The Lighthouse rotates from 6 pm in the evening, when the sun sets, until 6 am in the morning. During the entire night, the light shines on the lantern, it goes down 24 meters, and the Lighthouse is 30 meters high. It is designed not to collapse," Mr. Fingal ex-

plains.

Mr. Fingal further explains that in one night, the lighthouse rotates 4,320 times and consumes one gallon of kerosene for the whole operation. "At that time, the kerosene was supplied from the Lago refinery. Every day it was brought down, and to start the light again, they had to lift the weight up, so our job as children was to crank it and raise the weight back up in the evening when the light stuck, they would take it down again, and the light stayed down. That's how it worked for a very long time," Mr. Fingal explains.

Thanks to the Monument Fund Aruba, which worked hard and is currently in charge of the Lighthouse, Mr. Fingal is very happy with its preservation, along with all the renovations that have taken place. He hopes that the story of the lighthouse will continue to live on for future generations.







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able all day long, there are also special events going on every single day at the resort, like a complimentary kids cave for example or the Kids Yoga for only \$20. You may also opt for a \$35 day pass including Food and Beverage credit to be

used at this amazing Resort. Ask for the specials for a lodging experience at Courtyard by Marriott Aruba Resort. As of September, your stay will include a complimentary Breakfast Buffet for two at Allegra Bistro, complimentary wel-



come drink, activities such as Yoga and Aqua Zumba, 24-hour gym access, 10-minute complimentary massage and much more. Once you're done having a hearty meal, let the kids enjoy themselves to their heart's content, you can continue exploring Aruba

right in front of the resort by visiting the famous Bird Sanctuary, as well as a special beach shuttle that transports the guests to the beach during the day, which is a walking distance from where you can enjoy the heat of Palm Beach's nightlife at night.

# Aruba Tourism Authority honors loyal visitors at La Cabana Beach Resort & Spa!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. These honorees were honored with certificates acknowledging their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:  
Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)  
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The honorees were: Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba Mr. Donald & Mrs. Sandra Cole from Michigan, United States, Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba Mr. Peter & Mrs. Sandra Wentland from Connecticut, United States and Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba Mr. Paul & Mrs. Domenica Dattolo from New Jersey, United States.

Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the La Cabana Beach Resort bestowed the certificates to the honorees, presented them with memorable gifts, and also thanked them for choosing



Aruba as their best-loved vacation destination, as their home away from home.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by Mr. & Mrs. Cole were: "Best vacation ever!"

Aruba's warm and friendly people  
Aruba safety  
Aruba beauty  
"Sun, sand, and Sea"

Top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by Mr. &

Mrs. Wentland were: Aruba's warm and friendly people  
Aruba's sun  
Aruba's beaches  
"Aruba is the best place to vacation"  
Aruba's safety

Top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by Mr. & Mrs. Dattolo were: Aruba's friendly people  
"Sun and fun"  
Aruba's beauty  
"Things to do"  
"Aruba is our home away from home"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island".



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## Aruba Tourism Authority honors loyal visitors at Playa Linda Beach Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. This lovely couple was honored with a certificate acknowledging their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor	(10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador	(20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador	(35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba Mr. Richard & Mrs. Tina Merlino from New York, United States.



Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Playa Linda Beach Resort bestowed the certificate to the honorees, presented them with memorable gifts, and also

thanked them for choosing Aruba as their best-loved vacation destination, as their home away from home.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

Aruba's warm consistent weather and nice sandy beaches

Aruba's warm and friendly people

Aruba's food

Aruba's cleanliness and safety

"Things to Do"

Aruba's safety

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island".

## Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals

(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell,

sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face

a fine that they have to pay before leaving. This is surely not a pleasant experience for the tourist. This also leads to a negative reaction which can put our tourism in a negative light.

Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours!



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# Today Is Going To Be A Good Day

Here's why: Aruba Today collected some things to do BEYOND the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whip-tail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center. For



most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015 Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse started in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company

and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in 1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light. www.arubalighthouse.com will give you more information.

Kayak in the Mangroves Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a

beauty, but if you are into a more active way to enjoy the nature: take a kayak. While you are doing some workout -as it might get a little windy and rough-, you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. Its fun, it's healthy and for sure something else. There are several companies that offer kayak tours, we had good experience with The Shack Kayak Tours Aruba, find them on Facebook.



**Nature Calls**  
The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots.

more information, visit the website [www.arubanationalpark.org](http://www.arubanationalpark.org)  
  
The Lighthouse  
No, you would not think of this as a hidden gem. The California Lighthouse is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests

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Article by Etnia Nativa

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## Limestone terraces

Each week, Etnia Nativa presents a new episode about cultural heritage, focusing on native knowledge, transcendental wisdom, and the importance of defending the true heart of Aruba. It connects the reader to that mystical aspect of the island's culture and traditions, encouraging everyone to interact with our unique environment. This episode shares about the limestone landscape that surely captures the visitor's attention due to its outstanding terraces with little vegetation.

During your discovery tour of Aruba, you will be able to differentiate between three basic geological formations: a hilly part, a wavy part, and a third formed precisely by limestone as the accumulation of corals and shells in the sea compacted together for the last 540 million years. Embracing the land visible, it forms the coastline on the north and east coasts of the island. However, you can also find similar landscape spots inland on the island in places like Frenchman's Pass, Canashito, and Isla, for example. Inland limestone's areas are an exception because these areas are typically surrounded by a quartz diorite landscape. The combination of limestone and quartz diorite also results in permanent freshwater sources, like in Fonteín. The limestone filters rainwater collected over the years and releases this water at the edge where the limestone meets the quartz diorite.

Limestone is exposed over large regions of the island's surface, and because limestone is slightly soluble in rainwater, these exposures often erode into karst landscapes, a type of landscape where the dissolution of the bed-



rock has created sinkholes, sinking streams, caves, springs, etc. In Aruba, the most remarkable geological features of the limestone landscape are the caves. They were formed by the dissolution of limestone by rain and groundwater, being exposed to changes in sea level and upward tectonic movements of the earth's crust. For obvious reasons, the majority of pre-ceramic sites are situated in limestone areas. At Canashito, five individuals belonging to this archaic group were buried in an open space on a big limestone outcrop.

At Malmok Cemetery, 70 individuals were buried beneath large chunks of limestone. The ceramic sites found on limestone show no signs of long-term habitation, as these areas lack suitable agricultural soils (unless they occur in association with a quartz diorite (QD) landscape), making the hydrological conditions somewhat more favorable for some freshwater sources in these areas. Also, one ceramic burial has been



found in a limestone cave, being one of the four historic activities that have been recorded in the island's caves.

Prehistoric groups also used several of these limestone caves for their pictographs. Fonteín, Guadiriquiri, and Canashito exhibit fantastic rock art transmitting ancient expressions of existence out in the limestone, while in Rooi Thomas and Rincón, the drawings were made in a large open limestone space facing the salty winds. However, no limestone tools have been found associated with these prehistoric groups because the softness of the rock could be considered a debilitating factor for most tools. A variety of limestone called crystalline limestone has been used to make human figures. Furthermore, all of these categories of rocks can also be divided into crystalline rocks of the Aruba lava formation (batholith), basalt, gabbro, etc., which are impermeable, and limestone, which has the natural components of the more recent landscape.

So if you are interested in really getting to know everything about all Aruba's rock types, whether it's geology, flora, or fauna, the island's history from prehistoric times, and much more as our unique autochthonous art, and interacting with the true identity of your gorgeous trip destination, book a visit to Etnia Nativa, a unique native gem! Let Anthony, our acclaimed cultural columnist, guide and lecture you regarding the most interesting and revealing stories about Aruba's undiscovered Etnia Nativa, an adventure beyond beaches and tourist traps. Visit his magnificent dwelling that integrates natural and reused materials, bursting with culture and island heritage, and you'll love Aruba beyond beaches!

Appointments and confirmations through WhatsApp +297 592 2702 or etnianativa03@gmail.com.





**CROSSWORD**

By **THOMAS JOSEPH**

**ACROSS**

- 40 African antelope
- 1 Javelin
- 6 Pull forcefully
- 10 Momma's mate
- 11 Head, in slang
- 12 Space visitor
- 13 National symbol
- 14 Alley prowlers
- 15 Dojo doings
- 16 Pitching stat
- 17 Snapshot
- 18 Twisty fish
- 19 Shredded
- 22 Herring's kin
- 23 Teller of tales
- 26 Bundled for cold weather, say
- 29 Beat walker
- 32 Spying org.
- 33 Soccer's Hamm
- 34 Bare one's soul
- 36 Join the choir
- 37 Home design
- 38 Writer Puzo
- 39 Make blank

**DOWN**

- 1 Keyboard bar
- 2 The North Star
- 3 Head-stone words
- 4 Some primates
- 5 Operated
- 6 Calendar span
- 7 Pond growth
- 8 Nick of movies
- 9 Prepare to propose

V	A	M	P	S		Z	E	B	R	A
I	D	I	O	T		O	G	R	E	S
C	O	T	T	O	N	W	O	O	D	S
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R	E	S	T	A	T	E		D	I	N
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W	A	F	F	L	E	I	R	O	N	S
A	B	O	U	T		N	U	D	G	E
Y	A	R	N	S		S	T	E	E	D

**Yesterday's answer**

- 11 Guilty admission
- 15 Young one
- 17 Toe treatment
- 20 Poet Octavio
- 21 Diner dessert
- 24 Navy bigwig
- 25 Spoiling event
- 27 Card spot
- 28 Asian temple
- 29 Message systems
- 30 Sung drama
- 31 Praline bit
- 35 Snow-man's carrot
- 36 Store event
- 38 "Doesn't excite me"

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9
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37							38		
39							40		
41							42		

11-29

A X Y D L B A A X R  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

11-29

**CRYPTOQUOTE**

G A E D C X H ' L Y G D U D Q A P ' U D

T U A E ; C L ' X Y G D U D Q A P T C H S

N C M G L Y G D H K N N M U A Y X

S K U R . — V C D U F D O U A Y H

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: HAPPINESS IS WHEN WHAT YOU THINK, WHAT YOU SAY, AND WHAT YOU DO ARE IN HARMONY. — MAHATMA GANDHI

## Ransomware attack prompts multistate hospital chain to divert some emergency room patients elsewhere

By **Jonathan Mattise**

**Associated Press**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) —**

A ransomware attack has prompted a healthcare chain that operates 30 hospitals in six states to divert patients from at least some of its emergency rooms to other hospitals, while putting certain elective procedures on pause, the company announced. In a statement Monday, Ardent Health Services said the attack occurred Nov. 23 and the company took its network offline, suspending user access to its information technology applications, including the software used to document patient care.

The company said it cannot yet confirm the extent of any patient health or financial information that has been compromised. Ardent says it reported the issue to law enforcement and retained third-



The University of Kansas Health System St. Francis, 1700 S.W. 7th St. exterior shown on Aug. 5, 2021, in Topeka, Kan.

(Evert Nelson/The Topeka Capital-Journal via AP)

party forensic and threat intelligence advisors, while working with cybersecurity specialists to restore IT functions as quickly as possible. There's no timeline yet on when the problems will be resolved.

Ardent, which is based in the Nashville, Tennessee, suburb of Brentwood, owns and operates 30 hospitals

and more than 200 care sites with upwards of 1,400 aligned providers in Oklahoma, Texas, New Jersey, New Mexico, Idaho and Kansas.

All of its hospitals are continuing to provide medical screenings and stabilizing care to patients arriving at emergency rooms, the company said. □

## Fake babies, real horror: Deepfakes from the Gaza war increase fears about AI's power to mislead



A Palestinian man collects his belongings southeast of the Gaza City on Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2023, on the fifth day of the temporary ceasefire between Hamas and Israel.

(AP Photo/Adel Hana)

By **David Klepper Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP) —** Among images of the bombed out homes and ravaged streets of Gaza, some stood out for the utter horror: Bloodied, abandoned infants. Viewed millions of times online since the war began, these images are deepfakes created using artificial intelligence. If you look closely you can see clues: fingers that curl oddly, or eyes that shimmer with an unnatural light all telltale signs of digital deception. The outrage the images were created to provoke, however, is all too real. Pictures from the Israel-Hamas war have vividly and painfully illustrated AI's potential as a propaganda tool, used to create lifelike images of carnage. □

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24/7



# Fed's Waller raises possibility of a rate cut by spring if inflation keeps slowing

By Christopher Rugaber  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — A key Federal Reserve official raised the possibility Tuesday that the Fed could decide to cut its benchmark interest rate as early as spring if inflation keeps declining steadily.

The official, Christopher Waller, a member of the Fed's Board of Governors, cautioned that inflation is still too high and that it's not yet certain if a recent slowdown in price increases can be sustained. But he sounded the most optimistic notes of any Fed official since the central bank launched its aggressive streak of rate hikes in March 2022, and he signaled that the central bank is likely done raising rates.

Waller is regarded as a relatively "hawkish" official, meaning that he typically favors higher rates to combat inflation rather than low rates to boost job growth. But he has also become somewhat of a bellwether for the Fed's overall rate-setting committee.

If inflation continues to cool "for several more months I don't know how long that might be three months, four months, five months that we feel confident that inflation is really down and



Federal Reserve Board of Governors member Christopher Waller poses for a photo on May 23, 2022, in Washington. (AP Photo/Patrick Semansky, File)

on its way, you could then start lowering the policy rate just because inflation is lower," Waller said in remarks at the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank. "It has nothing to do with trying to save the economy or recession."

Fed officials have previously suggested that eventually, cooling inflation would lead the Fed to cut rates. That's because, adjusted for inflation, the central bank's benchmark rate effectively rises as inflation falls.

And because the Fed's key rate affects rates on consumer and business loans, like mortgages and credit cards, it becomes more of a drag on the

economy. That's why as inflation slows, the Fed could reduce its benchmark rate just to keep its inflation-adjusted level stationary.

Still, Waller's remarks were a more explicit suggestion that such a scenario could occur as early as spring. Waller also said he thought the Fed's short-term rate,

which is at 5.4%, the highest in 22 years, is likely high enough to keep inflation headed down to the central bank's 2% target.

"I am increasingly confident," he said, that the Fed's interest rate policies are "currently well-positioned to slow the economy and get inflation back to 2%," Waller said. □

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## New documentary offers a peek into the triumphs and struggles of Muslim chaplains in US military

By Mariam Fam  
Associated Press

(AP) - The woman refused to sell Captain Saleha Jabeen a hijab to don with her military uniform. While many civilian Muslims tell Jabeen she makes them proud, others are horrified by her decision to serve. "You're gonna go kill Muslims," the store owner told her that day.

Major Rafael Lantigua Jr. has experienced the flip side of that struggle. Angered by an attack on U.S. troops in Iraq, a fellow service member once barked at Lantigua: "Why can't you call your people and tell them to stop?"

The words stung. Just as Jabeen thought the woman saw her as a bad Muslim, Lantigua felt the implication of the outburst directed at him was: You don't belong. (The service member later apologized).

In the years since, Jabeen and Lantigua have become part of the small group of Muslim military chaplains who tend to the souls and spirits of U.S. troops of all faiths and no



This still image provided by Terrace Films, shows Saleha Jabeen at an Army Reserve Base, in September 2017, in Fort Sheridan, Ill. (Courtesy David Washburn/Terrace Films via AP)

faith their work highlighted in a new film that offers a peek into their worlds. Among other duties, they give talks on suicide prevention, provide counsel on relationships, and advise commanders on matters of religion and morale. When the going gets tough, they offer comfort, hope and companionship.

They sometimes break barriers and celebrate milestones, like Jabeen becoming the first female Muslim military chaplain a few years ago.

At other times, they navigate tensions stemming from the views some have of their faith or their service when those get questioned, scrutinized, debat-

ed.

"We're bridge builders," Lantigua said in an interview. "We're trying our best in this tension to get like-minded individuals to see the humanity of the other." Jabeen and Lantigua are featured in "Three Chaplains," a documentary that recently aired on PBS and is now available online. (The

third is Army Col. Khallid Shabazz). In the film and in interviews, they provide a window into the struggles and victories of Muslim chaplains and service members in one of the most American of institutions.

Lantigua said his familiarity with Islam has helped him maneuver through this "tension" that fraught space, squeezed between skepticism by some non-Muslims and dismay by some civilian Muslims, especially over U.S. wars in Muslim-majority countries.

The friction, he said, ebbs and flows. It was heightened during such times as 9/11, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the aftermath of a 2009 deadly shooting rampage on a military base in Texas by a Muslim Army psychiatrist.

"These voices from both sides of the aisle start piling on upon Muslim service members," Lantigua said. That can be especially hard for new troops, said Lantigua, who's served for nearly three decades, including deployments in Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan. □

## Judge cites handwritten will and awards real estate to Aretha Franklin's sons

By White Ed  
Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — A judge overseeing the estate of Aretha Franklin awarded

real estate to the late star's sons, citing a handwritten will from 2014 that was found between couch cushions.



In this Dec. 4, 2008 file photo, Aretha Franklin performs during the 85th annual Christmas tree lighting at the New York Stock Exchange in New York.

(AP Photo/Mary Altaffer, File)

The decision Monday came four months after a Detroit-area jury said the document was a valid will under Michigan law, despite scribbles and many hard-to-read passages. Franklin had signed it and put a smiley face in the letter "A."

The papers will override a handwritten will from 2010 that was found at Franklin's suburban Detroit home around the same time in 2019, the judge said.

One of her sons, Kecalf Franklin, will get that property, which was valued at \$1.1 million in 2018, but is now worth more. A lawyer described it as the "crown jewel" before trial last July. Another son, Ted White II, who had favored the 2010

will, was given a house in Detroit, though it was sold by the estate for \$300,000 before the dueling wills had emerged.

"Teddy is requesting the sale proceeds," Charles McKelvie, an attorney for Kecalf Franklin, said Tuesday.

Judge Jennifer Callaghan awarded a third son, Edward Franklin, another property under the 2014 will.

Aretha Franklin had four homes when she died of pancreatic cancer in 2018. The discovery of the two handwritten wills months after her death led to a dispute between the sons over what their mother wanted to do with her real estate and other assets.

One of the properties, worth more than \$1 million, will likely be sold and the proceeds shared by four sons. The judge said the 2014 will didn't clearly state who should get it.

"This was a significant step forward. We've narrowed the remaining issues," McKelvie said of the estate saga.

There's still a dispute over how to handle Aretha Franklin's music assets, though the will appears to indicate that the sons would share any income. A status conference with the judge is set for January.

Franklin was a global star for decades, known especially for hits in the late 1960s like "Think," "I Say a Little Prayer" and "Respect." □



## Defending champ UConn ready for Allen Fieldhouse and showdown with Kansas

By Dave Skretta  
Associated Press

(AP) - Purdue is back on top of the AP Top 25 this week, but the team it replaced will still be in the spotlight this week.

Kansas, the preseason No. 1, will return from the loaded Maui Invitational and attempt to pick up another marquee win when the fifth-ranked Jayhawks play defending national champion and fourth-ranked UConn on Friday night in Allen Fieldhouse.

Rarely do top programs play each other on college campuses these days, opting instead for easy matchups against the likes of Eastern Illinois, which the Jayhawks played Tuesday night.

The big-time showdowns have been increasingly pushed onto neutral floors in lucrative made-for-TV tournaments and events, such as the Maui Invitational, where the Jayhawks lost to fourth-ranked Marquette in the semifinals before re-



UConn's center Donovan Clingan (32) looks to shoot over New Hampshire forward Clarence Daniels, right, as New Hampshire forward Jaxson Baker, left, defends in the second half of an NCAA college basketball game, Monday, Nov. 27, 2023, in Storrs, Conn.

(AP Photo/Jessica Hill)

bounding to beat No. 10 Tennessee in the third-place game.

"Whenever you play a tournament, exempt tournament, everybody wants to go into it thinking 3-0. In this field, I guarantee you all

the coaches were thinking 2-1's a good trip," said Kansas coach Bill Self, whose team also was tested on an a neutral floor when it beat No. 12 Kentucky in Chicago. "I don't think there's anybody's walking

away saying 2-1 was not a success."

The revamped Huskies have been tested this season, too, picking up wins over Indiana and No. 16 Texas to win the Saa-tva Empire Classic in New

York earlier this month. But the real tough stretch for coach Dan Hurley's team is just beginning.

UConn plays the Jayhawks on Friday night, then returns to Madison Square Garden on Dec. 5 to play No. 17 North Carolina in the Jimmy V Classic. After a breather against Arkansas-Pine Bluff, the Huskies play No. 11 Gonzaga on Dec. 15 in the Continental Tire Tipoff, then begin a brutal race in the Big East the league had four teams in the Top 25 this week.

The marquee matchup in the showdown between the ACC and SEC was Tuesday night, when eighth-ranked Miami travels to No. 12 Kentucky, while No. 23 Alabama played Clemson. The event continues on Wednesday, when No. 11 Tennessee visits No. 17 North Carolina, No. 14 Texas A&M visits Virginia and seventh-ranked Duke heads to Arkansas, which dropped out of the Top 25 this week. □

## Bayern Munich extends goalkeeper Manuel Neuer's contract by a year after comeback from injury

Associated Press

**MUNICH (AP)** — Bayern Munich gave goalkeeper and captain Manuel Neuer a one-year contract extension Tuesday after his successful return from a broken leg.

The new contract is a sign of faith in the 37-year-old Neuer, who returned to action Oct. 28 for Bayern following more than 10 months out after he broke his leg while skiing. The announcement came a day before Bayern plays Copenhagen in the Champions League.

Neuer's contract had been due to expire at the end of the season. The one-year extension ensures he will still be a Bayern player when Germany hosts the European Championship next year and takes him through

to the end of the 2024-25 season, when the Champions League final will be played at Bayern's home stadium.

"After my long injury, I'm

back in full swing. It's immense fun for me to be on the pitch with this team," Neuer said in a club statement. "I'm sure that, together with the fans, we

can achieve our big goals in the coming years and obviously the 2025 Champions League final in Munich is one of them."

Neuer has played 494 times for Bayern since he joined the club in 2011. Bayern also announced a one-year extension through to 2025 for his longtime backup Sven Ulreich.

Bayern has won five out of six games since Neuer returned, scoring 20 goals and conceding just five. The one blemish on that record was a shock 2-1 German Cup loss to third-tier Saarbruecken on Nov. 1. Coach Thomas Tuchel paid tribute to Neuer on Tuesday, calling his return "crucial" to the team's improvement.

"Manuel has shown since his comeback that he's not

lost any of his ability," chief executive Jan-Christian Dreesen said.

Bayern goes into Wednesday's game against Copenhagen already qualified for the Champions League knockout stages and on run of 17 consecutive wins in group-stage games. Bayern has gone a record 38 games unbeaten in the group stage since a loss to Paris Saint-Germain in 2017.

After defender Matthijs de Ligt returned to individual training Monday following a knee injury, Tuchel indicated he doesn't expect the Dutch center-back to play for Bayern again this year. The team's last game before the winter break in Germany is against Wolfsburg in the Bundesliga on Dec. 20. □



Bayern's goalkeeper Manuel Neuer adjusts his socks during the German Bundesliga soccer match between 1.FC Cologne and Bayern Munich in Cologne, Germany, Friday, Nov. 24, 2023.

(AP Photo/Martin Meissner)



## No. 4 Florida State heads to ACC title game looking to add to 'Sod Cemetery' and 'finish for 13'

By Mark Long  
Associated Press

(AP) - Kneeling in the south end zone at Ben Hill Griffin Stadium, Florida State running back Trey Benson tried to cut out a chunk of grass with scissors. It wasn't working on the orange-painted turf, so teammate Jared Verse stepped in to help. Together, and despite a police officer trying to dissuade them from finishing the task, they found success with their bare hands. They ripped out a keepsake destined for the program's famed "Sod Cemetery" in Tallahassee. It could be the first of several souvenirs for the fourth-ranked Seminoles (12-0) over the next month. Nearly a year after several key players opted to stay in school and chase championships, Verse and star quarterback Jordan Travis led the way. FSU is on the verge of another one. The 'Noles will play No. 15 Louisville (10-2) in the Atlantic Coast Conference title game Saturday in Charlotte, North Carolina. Florida State has a spot in



Florida State linebacker Kalen DeLoach (4) celebrates with defensive lineman Patrick Payton (11) after he intercepted a Florida pass late in the second half of an NCAA college football game Saturday, Nov. 25, 2023, in Gainesville, Fla.

(AP Photo/John Raoux)

the College Football Playoff on the line, and even with Travis now a spectator because of a gruesome left leg injury sustained in the team's home finale Nov. 18, players and coaches refuse to settle for anything less. They have even embraced a "finish for 13"

mantra that is a shoutout to Travis' jersey number and all he has done for the program.

"It means a lot," Verse said. "The whole season, 11 games, he was there every step of the way. ... He's still there. It means so much for us to go out there and

put on (a show) for him. We gave everything we had. I feel like everybody hit another mental gear, another physical gear, that we don't talk about enough. That's what we're capable of. "After the game, you look him in the eyes and we're like, 'Hey, we did

that for you.' He's smiling and just feels genuine joy. Even though he wasn't on the field with us, he was still there."

Travis really got FSU's special season started last December when he announced he would return for a sixth year, the last five in Tallahassee after beginning his college career at Louisville. Standout receiver Johnny Wilson made a similar announcement the following day and then Benson joined them two days later.

Verse waited until January to declare his intentions. A first-team All-ACC selection after leading Florida State with 14 1/2 tackles for loss in 2022, including 7 1/2 sacks, Verse turned down NFL millions to run it back with teammates.

All those guys surely helped coach Mike Norvell land stud transfers like receiver Keon Coleman (Michigan State), tight end Jaheim Bell (South Carolina), defensive tackle Braden Fiske (Western Michigan) and cornerback Fentrell Cypress II (Virginia). □

## Julius Peppers and Antonio Gates advance to semifinal stage for Pro Football Hall of Fame

By Josh Dubow  
Associated Press

(AP) - Three-time All-Pro Julius Peppers and Antonio Gates were chosen as semifinalists for the Pro Football Hall of Fame's class of 2024 in their first year of eligibility. Peppers and Gates headline a group of 25 modern-day semifinalists announced Tuesday by the Hall of Fame from a group of 173 nominees announced in September. The only other player who advanced to the semifinal stage for the first time was running back Tiki Barber. Eight players who made it to the final stage of 15 in the class of 2023 return as semifinalists this year with Jared Allen, Dwight Freeney, Devin Hester, Andre

Johnson, Torrey Holt, Patrick Willis, Willie Anderson and Darren Woodson all looking to get in after falling short a year ago. The other semifinalists are Eric Allen, Anquan Boldin, Jahri Evans, London Fletcher, Eddie George, James Harrison, Rodney Harrison, Robert Mathis, Steve Smith Sr., Fred Taylor, Hines Ward, Ricky Watters, Reggie Wayne and Vince Wilfork. The 25 semifinalists will be reduced to 15 finalists before the final voting process in January. The 15 finalists will be trimmed to 10 and then five during the selection meeting early next year. The final five candidates will need to get 80% of the votes from the panel to get into the Hall.

Peppers and Gates were both college basketball players before finding their greatest success in football. Peppers was one of the league's most dominant linemen after being picked second overall by Carolina in 2002 following a two-sport career in college at North Carolina. He had 12 sacks as a rookie and never really slowed down in a 17-year career that included stops in Chicago and Green Bay before ending with the Panthers. He was an All-Pro in 2004, 2006 and 2010. Peppers finished his career with 159 1/2 sacks the fourth most since they became official in 1982 and had 10 seasons with double-digit sacks. Only



Carolina Panthers' Julius Peppers looks on from the sidelines during the first half of an NFL football game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in Charlotte, N.C., Dec. 24, 2017.

(AP Photo/Bob Leverone, File)

Hall of Famers Bruce Smith (13) and Reggie White (12) had more. Four finalists previously announced are Buddy Parker in the coaching category, and Randy

Gradishar, Steve McMichael and Art Powell in the senior category. They also will get in if they get support from at least 80% of voters. □